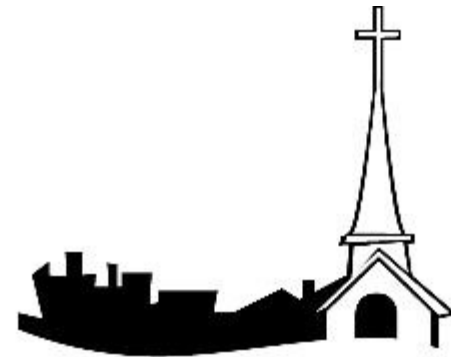


**St. Theresa
of the Child Jesus Parish**
1230 Merle Hay Road
Des Moines, IA 50311
515-279-4654

**Faith Formation
Handbook and
Curriculum Guide**

2011-2012



St. Theresa
of the Child Jesus
FAITH FORMATION

**St. Theresa of the Child Jesus
Parish Faith Formation**

Office Address: 1230 Merle Hay Road

Des Moines, IA 50311-2098

Office Phone: (515) 279-4654

Office Fax: (515)-277-0838

Parish Web Site: www.sainttheresaiowa.org/

Parish email: parishoffice@yahoo.com

Parish Staff

Rev. Mark Neal, Pastor

Mary Gisler, Parish Manager

Sr. Joyce Blum, Pastoral Care Minister

Anne Dols, Pastoral Care Minister

John McMichael, Parish Accountant

Barb Woods, Adult Faith Formation/Music/RCIA

Ellen Stemler, School Principal

Amanda Vande, Parish Secretary

Director of Faith Formation

Kathy Wipf

Office Phone: (515) 279-4654 x304

email: kwipf@sainttheresaiowa.org

Office Location and Hours

The Faith Formation Office is in the Parish Office Building. Hours there are generally 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.



<p>DIOCESE OF DES MOINES COUNCIL FOR CATECHESIS Parish Faith Formation Policies/Regulations</p>
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CHILDREN AND YOUTH: Parent/Youth Handbook Signature Page

Diocese of Des Moines

*****RECEIPT FORM*****

I have read the St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Faith Formation Parent/Youth Handbook for the year 2011-12. I agree to abide by and follow the policies and procedures contained therein.

Signed and due back to the parish Office of Faith Formation by September 28, 2011.

Youth's signatures are required for all in Grade 4 - Grade 12.

Youth's Signature and Date

Youth's Signature and Date

Youth's Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian signatures are required of all parents/guardians.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

**DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
COUNCIL FOR CATECHESIS
Parish Faith Formation Policies/Regulations**

CHILDREN AND YOUTH: Handbook

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines that each family with children enrolled in a faith formation program receives a copy of the Parent/Youth Handbook for the year of enrollment. The Handbook must be updated at least annually. The Handbook must contain a signature page which stipulates that the children/youth and parent/guardian have read the Handbook and will abide by the rules and regulations contained therein. **Parents/guardians with children below Grade 4 may only need to discuss some parts of the Handbook with their children.**

Each child/youth in Grade 4 through Grade 12 and their parents/guardians must sign and date the signature page and return it to the parish Office of Faith Formation as soon as possible at the beginning of the program year or, if the child enrolls after the program year has begun, as soon as possible upon enrollment.



Please complete the inserted receipt form, obtain the appropriate family signatures, date it, and return it to the parish Faith Formation Director by September 28, 2011. Thank you.

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St. Theresa Lifelong Faith Formation
Vision Statement

Faith Formation at St. Theresa Parish is an ongoing collaborative ministry. It encompasses all aspects of parish life so that each baptized person will more fully understand his or her faith and live it out at all times and in all places. Faith Formation will be constantly nurtured in our parish by providing a variety of opportunities through prayer, liturgy, service, and catechetical processes.

Faith Formation adheres to the Six Essential Tasks of Catechesis:

- Knowledge of the Faith
- Liturgical Life
- Moral Formation
- Prayer
- Community
- Missionary Spirit
-

We also incorporate the four pillars of stewardship which richly complement the tasks of catechesis:

- Formation
- Prayer
- Hospitality
- Service

Faith Formation is a lifelong process that promotes an environment of Christian values and spiritual growth needed for establishing and maintaining a strong relationship with Jesus.

At the time of each child's Baptism, parents accepted the responsibility and duty of training their child in the practice of the Faith. The student sessions of Faith Formation assist and support parents and families in this remarkable task.



2011-12 Sunday School Schedule

Sunday School *usually* meets the first, second and third Sundays of each month, September through May, in the lower level of the Parish Office Building during 9:30 Mass.

September 11 18 25
(no class Labor Day Weekend)

October 2 9 16

November 6 13 20

December 4 11 18

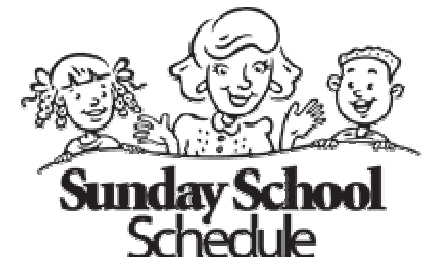
January 8 15 22
(no class New Year's Day)

February 5 12 19

March 4 11 25
(no class March 18 Spring Break)

April 1 15 22
(no class April 8 Easter)

May 6 13 20



6th & 7th Grade Room Schedule

6th and 7th grade will begin MOST sessions in the classroom.
However, **SOME** sessions begin in the media center

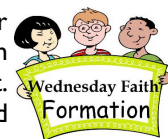
Sept 14, 2011	Classroom
Sept 21	Media Ctr
Sept 28	Classroom
Oct 5	Media Ctr
Oct 12	Church
Oct 16/19 (GOF)	Parish Hall
Oct 26	Classroom
Nov 2	Media Ctr
Nov 9	Classroom
Nov 16	Classroom
Nov 30	Media Ctr
Dec 7	Classroom
Dec 14	Classroom
Jan 18, 2012	Media Ctr
Jan 25	Classroom
Feb 1	Media Ctr
Feb 8	Classroom
Feb 15	Media Ctr
Feb 29	Classroom
Mar 4/7 (GOF)	Parish Hall
Mar 14	Classroom
Apr 11	Media Ctr
Apr 18	Classroom
Apr 25	Classroom
May 2	Classroom
May 9	Classroom

Faith Formation Programs



Sunday School for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten meets in the lower level of the Administration Building on the 1st/2nd/3rd Sundays of the month, September through May, during 9:30 Mass. Children must be four years old by September 15 of the current school year to be registered for this program.

Wednesday Faith Formation (WFF) for Kindergarten through 8th Grade meets on Wednesday evenings, September to May, in St. Theresa's Parish School, beginning at 6:30 pm and ending at 7:35 pm. **For safety reasons, students are not to be on the parish grounds before 6:20 pm and they should be picked up immediately following their dismissal time.**



Generations of Faith (GOF) Festivals are event-centered, intergenerational catechetical gatherings for all parishioners, regardless of age. GOF festivals are offered two times during the school year. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Schedules for the programs above are in the back of this handbook.



Children's Liturgy of the Word meets during 11:30 am Mass most Sundays. Children in grades Pre-K through 4th grade are dismissed from the assembly during Liturgy of the Word to listen to the readings, a homily and reflection, which is appropriate for their ages. This does not require registration for participation.

Vacation Bible School is offered during the summer months.
Information is usually available in April.

Registration



Registration forms must be completed for each child before they may participate in Faith Formation programs. Any parent, having agreed to support the Faith formation Program at St. Theresa, may enroll their child. Forms are available in the parish office, or by contacting the DFF.

Tuition Rates for 2011-12

Registration Fee	\$15.00 per family
Sunday School	\$20.00 per child

Wednesday Faith Formation Fees	
One child	\$ 60.00
Two children	\$100.00
Three or more children	\$130.00

No family or child will be turned away for financial reasons.

Retreat fees and sacramental preparation fees, if required, are assessed separately.

There is no charge for Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Catechists in the Faith Formation Program are charged only the registration fee of \$15.00.

Catechist In-Services

Wed Aug 17	6:30-8:00 pm	School Media Center
Wed Jan 5	7:00 pm	St. Francis of Assisi, WDM
Wed Jan 11	6:30—8:00 pm	School Media Center
Wed May 16	6:30 - 8:00 pm	School Media Center

Generations of Faith Schedule for 2011-12

All festivals begin at 6 pm in the Parish Hall with a meal and conclude by 8 pm. Pick a Wed or Sun each time to attend

GOF sessions are considered part of the WFF schedule (attendance is required).

Wed Oct 19 or Sun Oct 23

Sun Mar 4 or Wed Mar 7



Our Journey
of Faith

Liturgical dates for 2010-11

Feast of St. Theresa October 1, 2011
 Advent begins November 27, 2011
 Feast of the Immaculate Conception December 8, 2011
 (Holy Day of Obligation)
 Ash Wednesday is February 22, 2012
 Palm Sunday is April 1, 2012
 Easter Sunday is April 8, 2012

2011—2012 SCHEDULE**(all times are 6:30-7:35 pm unless otherwise noted)**

Aug/Sep	Theme: Private & Communal Prayer	
Wed Sep 14	WFF Session #1	
Wed Sep 21	WFF Session #2	
Wed Sep 28	WFF Session #3	
Oct	Theme: Private & Communal Prayer	
Wed Oct 5	WFF Session #4	
Wed Oct 12	WFF Session #5	Family Mass
Wed Oct 19 or Sun Oct 23	WFF Session #6 Generations of Faith 6-8 PM Parish Hall —pick one to attend	
Wed Oct 26	WFF Session #7	6:30 – 7:35 pm
Nov	Theme: History of the Mass	
Wed Nov 2	WFF Session #8	
Wed Nov 9	WFF Session #9	
Wed Nov 16	WFF Session #10	Walk Thru Lit Yr
Wed Nov 30	WFF Session #11	
Dec	Theme: Formal & Dynamic Equivalence Translation	
Wed Dec 7	WFF Session #12	Advent/Christmas Prayer
Wed Dec 14	WFF Session #13	
Jan	Theme: Ita Missa Est	
Wed Jan 18	WFF Session #14	
Wed Jan 25	WFF Session #15	
Feb	Theme: The Liturgy of the Word	
Wed Feb 1	WFF Session #16	
Wed Feb 8	WFF Session #17	
Wed Feb 15	WFF Session #18	
Wed Feb 29	WFF Session #19	
Mar	Theme: Eucharistic Prayers in Mass	
Sun Mar 4 or Wed Mar 7	WFF Session #20 Generations of Faith 6-8 PM Parish Hall—pick one to attend	
Wed Mar 14	WFF Session #20	Reconciliation Gr 2-7
Apr	Theme: Catholic Aerobics: Boring or Active?	
Wed Apr 11	WFF Session #21	
Wed Apr 18	WFF Session #22	
Wed Apr 25	WFF Session #23	
May	Theme: Royal Priesthood for All	
Wed May 2	WFF Session #24	
Wed May 9	WFF Session #25	

Attendance Policy

Attendance in class is essential for children to gain the maximum benefit from participation in faith formation sessions. We ask that parents notify the Faith Formation office if their child/ren will be absent from class before 5:00 pm on Wednesdays using e-mail or phone. DO NOT leave a message on the school phone.

If a child is absent and the office has not been notified, every effort will be made to contact parents. For this reason, parents are asked to provide emergency contact information.

For the safety of the children, students are not to be on the parish grounds before 6:20 pm on Wednesdays, and they should be picked up immediately following dismissal at 7:35. The doors on the lower south side of the school are opened at 6:20 pm and remain open until the end of each session.

WFF begins at 6:30 pm and ends at 7:35 pm.

Attendance records are not compiled for Sunday School.



Cancellations & Emergency Closings

We do not automatically cancel class when the public schools are closed.

Parents will be of cancellation by e-mail and/or phone. The closings will also be announced on WHO and KRNT/KIOA Radio and KCCI TV Newslines.

Catechists

Catechists from the parish community are encouraged, trained and empowered to offer to the children some of the richness of our Catholic Tradition.

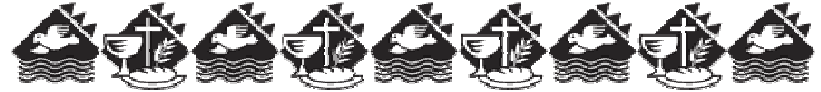
High School students may serve as assistants at the discretion of the director. High school seniors who have completed a year of apprenticeship will be considered Catechists.

Catechists have the right to expect adequate training and support for the ministry to which they are called. Catechists are required to complete Virtus Training, which focuses on providing a safe environment for children. Catechists are also encouraged to participate in faith formation opportunities, in-service meetings, and other offerings that enhance their own spiritual lives and catechetical skills. *Echoes of Faith Plus* is the catechist certification program recommended by the diocese and promoted by our parish.

St. Theresa Parish recognizes the family as the domestic church and that parents/guardians are the principal educators of their children. Catechists assist families in reinforcing the teachings of the church and help the family to grow in their spirituality.



Sacramental Preparation Schedules



First Reconciliation

Parent Meeting: Wednesday, September 28, 2011, Parish Hall, 6:45 to 7:30 pm.

Child/Parent Learning Centers: Wednesday, October 26, 2011, Parish Hall 3:15—8 pm

Celebration of First Reconciliation: Tuesday and Thursday, November 8 and 10, 2011, 7 pm; Church

First Communion

Parent Meeting: Wednesday, January 26, 2011, Parish Hall, 6:45 to 7:30 pm

Child/Parent Learning Centers: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, Parish Hall 3:30-8 pm

Celebration of First Communion at weekend Masses, (except 4:30 Sunday Mass) May 5 & 6, 2012. Times: Saturday 4:30 pm; Sunday 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 am



Confirmation

8th Grade Parent/Sponsor/Candidate Meeting: Wednesday, November 9, 2011, 6:45 to 7:45 pm, Parish Hall

Confirmation Retreat, Saturday, January 21, 2012

Rite of Choice, January 28/29, 2012, all weekend Masses except 4:30 Sunday

Celebration of Confirmation: Monday, April 16, 2012 @ 7 pm

IGNITE Sessions: Conducted during regular class times

Sacramental Preparation

Sacraments are times of joy and celebration for individual families and the entire parish community. They are graced moments that must be celebrated along the path of our Christian journey.

Normative ages for reception of the sacraments are seven (second grade) for both First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. After 2012, the normative grade for Confirmation will be raised to 10th grade.

Consistent attendance in a faith formation program or Catholic School for the year prior to and the year of a sacrament is a prerequisite for celebrating a sacrament. Students not participating in a faith formation program after celebrating First Eucharist will be evaluated and then participate in supplementary formation sessions determined by the needs of the child and family.

Parents of children preparing to receive sacraments are to attend sacramental preparation meetings to learn what their children will be studying and to receive support in their roles as parents in the process. **Special arrangements with the Director of Faith Formation are necessary if these meetings are not attended.**

The Sacramental Preparation Schedules for
First Reconciliation
First Communion
Confirmation
are on Page 13



Discipline Policy

In order to foster a Christian atmosphere of hospitality, caring and courtesy, and to promote maximum learning in the classrooms, the following guidelines are in force.

It shall be the policy that students attending Faith Formation Programs are expected to treat themselves, one another and all properties with respect and to demonstrate Christian-like conduct at all times.

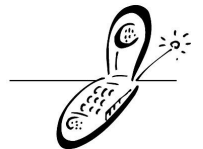
Catechists are trained and encouraged to deal with discipline problems in the classroom. When discipline problems arise it is the practice of the program to approach the situation with an attitude of Christian reconciliation.

Should a discipline problem persist, the catechist has the right to request that a student be excluded from the classroom. In this instance, parents will be contacted.



Dress Code: Good judgment on the part of the student and parents regarding what students wear to faith formation activities should be a primary concern. Inappropriate clothing such as hats, sports gear, T-shirts with offensive words or art, etc., will not be permitted.

Cell Phones, iPods, MP-3 players, etc. All personal electronic devices must be out of sight and not in use once students enter the building. These devices may not be used during faith formation sessions. Devices that are out will be safely held by the catechist, hall monitor or director until the session is over.



NO skating in the school building with HEELEYS (shoes with skates).

Curriculum

Faith Formation is built around the vision and philosophy described on page 4. Each year the St. Theresa Catechetical leadership team designates a theme for the year. During 2005-06 the theme was Prayer, in 2006-07 it was The Creed, in 2007-08 the theme was Sacraments and for 2008-09, the theme was Morality. The theme for 2009-10 was Scripture. The Theme for 2010-11 is Social Justice. The Theme for 2011-12 will be The Mass.

The faith formation series used by Wednesday Faith Formation is published by Harcourt Publishing. Students in Grades K-5 use the *Call to Faith* series. Students in Grades 6-8 use *Edge* (the middle school version of *LifeTeen* used in high school faith formation).



Communication

Communication is vital. Several methods are employed: letter, postcard, phone, e-mail, parish web site, weekend parish bulletin.



Family Involvement

At St. Theresa we recognize parents as the primary educators of their children, sharing their experiences, values, stories, customs and faith. We believe that the holiness a child is exposed to and experiences begins in the home long before the child comes to the parish for faith formation. As partners, we assist in promoting a durable and solid association with God, living life as God calls each one to live.

In addition to participating in the Generations of Faith Festivals, parents are invited to sit in on classes and to assist in the classrooms. Parents are urged to contact their child's catechist or faith formation director at any time.

No matter how well a catechist does in the classroom with a group of students, it is recognized that ***the home and the adults there are the most influential factors in a child's spiritual development.*** It is in the home that children are exposed to actions, words, and daily routines that impact their faith.

St. Theresa Parish is committed to providing families and individuals with opportunities to participate in faith formation activities. One way of accomplishing this is by offering two faith festivals each school year, called "**Generations of Faith (GOF) Festivals**"; ***all parishioners are invited to attend.***

GOF Festivals are part of the WFF schedule,; and as such, attendance is mandatory. GOF attendance is also required for some sacramental preparation. Children **MUST** be accompanied by at least one parent or other adult.

Each GOF festival is offered twice, Sunday and Wednesday evenings, 6-8 pm. GOF gatherings begin with a meal, which is provided by the parish. Faith formation activities are then presented in a variety of formats. Sometimes families remain together, sometimes those present are grouped by age.

After eating, learning and praying together, participants leave with a "take-home" packet containing additional information and activities to continue faith-sharing at home.